

है, और वह हर हफ्ते या पंद्रह दिन पर आ कर मेरे साथ बात चीत करते हैं। अगर किसी को कोई शिकायत होती है तो उस पर ध्यान दिया जाता है। और इस योजना को काफी सफलता मिल रही है।

श्री एम० एल० द्विवेदी : क्या मंत्रिणी महोदयाको मालूम है कि एक एम० पी० की पत्नी बहुत जरूरी काम से अस्पताल में दाखिल हुई, लेकिन २४ घंटे तक उनकी कोई देख भाल नहीं हुई ? उनसे पूरा पैसा लिया गया लेकिन फिर भी उनको कोई सहूलियत नहीं मिली ?

राजकुमारी अमृत कौर : मैं आप से कहती हूँ कि इस बारे में मैंने जांच की है, और अगर मेम्बर साहब चाहें मैं उनको इसके बारे में पूरा व्योरा दे सकती हूँ। जो कुछ उन्होंने कहा है वह बिल्कुल गलत है।

Shri Velayudhan: May I know whether in this Contributory Health Scheme the patients are not given the option to select their own doctors, because Government themselves select particular doctors and to them only the patients have to go and this has created a lot of difficulties for the patients with the result that they are not making proper use of this particular scheme at all?

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur: If the hon. Member will see the number of persons who take advantage of the Contributory Health Scheme, he will realise that a very large majority—in fact, all of them—are taking advantage of the scheme. Naturally, when Government appoints doctors, they put them in dispensaries and the people nearest to that dispensary go to them. There is no ban on anybody transferring himself to any other dispensary, provided he cares to go all that distance.

KANDLA PORT

***1341. Shri Gadilingana Gowd:** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the construction of Kandla Port is estimated to cost about Fourteen crores of rupees;

(b) (i) whether it is a fact that two of the Indian Firms and one German Firm combinedly have taken contract for construction,

(ii) the names of these firms,

(iii) whether it is a fact that one of the firms which was a solvent firm was allowed by Government to withdraw from the agreement of contract with Government,

(iv) if so, the reasons therefor, and

(v) whether it is a fact that the present contractors are financially not sound and therefore the work is behind schedule; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that abnormal rate of Rs. 2 lakhs per mile for laying tar topped road is being paid in this area?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) and (ii) Works costing in all Rs. 6.25 crores have been given on contract to a firm of contractors. The firm initially consisted of—

(a) M/s Mackenzies India Ltd.

(b) M/s Sindhu Resettlement Corporation Ltd. and

(c) M/s Heinrich Butzer.

(iii) Yes.

(iv) Mainly, lack of understanding and differences between the partners.

(v) No.

(c) The rate of Rs. 2 lakhs per mile cannot be considered abnormal if regard is had to the tidal conditions of the area where the roads are constructed and the superior specifications adopted in the light of these conditions.

Shri Gadilingana Gowd: May I know whether it is a fact that Government have adopted an extraordinary procedure of advancing loans to the contractors to purchase machinery necessary for executing the works contracted for? If so, why should Govern-

ment allow the sound parties to withdraw from the contract and follow this irregular procedure?

Mr. Speaker: All these assumptions may be right, may be wrong. But in a question no such assumptions should be made. The simple question should be "why should the contractor be given this advance when the other man who was willing to advance himself be allowed to withdraw?" No other observations.

Shri Alagesan: These advances were made in terms of the agreement which has been entered into between Government and the firm of contractors.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member wants to know why a solvent person was allowed to withdraw and another person who was not able to advance money was taken and money supplied to him. He says it is a novel procedure.

Shri Alagesan: This contract was entered into with the firm of contractors when one of the partners who dropped out subsequently was there. It was nothing new. That was my submission.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: In view of the fact that an ordinary concrete road can be constructed at a cost of Rs. 20,000 per mile, may I know how this cost of Rs. 2 lakhs per mile is not being considered excessive by Government?

Shri Alagesan: Normally, to have a road with this specification, it may take a lakh of rupees. But since it is an area affected by tidal conditions you have to have a high embankment, and the soil also is loose. Because of these conditions the cost is higher than the normal rate.

Shri Gadilingana Gowd: May I know if the Government is aware that the construction of tar roads even in hilly stations is made at a cost of Rs. 50 to 75 thousand as experienced

by State Governments; and if so, may I know the reasons why it should cost Rs. 2 lakhs in that area?

Mr. Speaker: He has said why it costs Rs. 2 lakhs.

Shri B. S. Murthy: May I know whether any monies have been advanced to this contractor and, if so, on what guarantee?

Shri Alagesan: On the guarantee of the machinery, equipment, etc. and the monies advanced are also paid back in instalments from the bills that are due to the contractor. That is the usual procedure. There is nothing very abnormal about it.

Shri Velayudhan: The hon. Minister said that this person was advanced money when there was a solvent party. What was the reason to give it to a particular person, advancing him money, when there was a solvent person already? May I know whether it will not be attributed as favouritism or something like that, at least by the public?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister stated the position in answer to another question. Hon. Members do not follow the answers. The hon. Minister said that this agreement was entered into under peculiar circumstances when even the previous solvent contractor was there and he said under these circumstances there is nothing new.

Shri Velayudhan: It is on the usual basis; is there nothing unusual in the matter?

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members cannot coerce the Government. They can only elicit information. They can choose other remedies if they are not satisfied with the action taken by the Government.

Shri Velayudhan: One question. He said that the solvent party was there. That does not mean that the solvent party was not willing to take it up. He has not said that the solvent party had not come forward and had rejected the proposal.

Shri Alagesan: Sir, if you will permit me.....

Mr. Speaker: No. I am not going to convert the Question Hour into a resolution hour or a debating hour. Question Hour is meant for eliciting answers. There are many other methods of bringing a matter before the House. I am not going to allow this. I find matters of policy discussion and debate are brought in questions. It is a very wrong practice. Hon. Members should once again read, before they assemble tomorrow, all the rules regarding this and the previous rulings also.

ERNAKULAM-QUILON RAILWAY

*1342. **Shri Velayudhan:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the present stage of construction of Railway line between Ernakulam and Quilon; and

(b) the amount already spent on the Railway line upto 1955-56?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) An overall progress of 52% of the work has been made.

(b) An expenditure of about Rs. 3 crores has been incurred upto the end of February 1956.

Shri Velayudhan: May I know the total mileage that has been completely constructed by this time, from Ernakulam to Quilon?

Shri Alagesan: I have given the overall figures. I do not have the break-up as to how many miles have been actually constructed. My information is that the section between Kottayam and Ernakulam may be ready for being opened by September this year.

Shri A. M. Thomas: May I know whether the Ministry is aware that every year a similar question used to appear when the Ministry used to give

the very same answer, that is by August or September or so of that year it would be opened? In the last two years it was being stated like that. May I know what exactly is the reason for not opening the Ernakulam Kottayam section of the line? May I also know what are the materials in short supply which stand in the way of the Government opening it?

Shri Alagesan: If the hon. Member will refer to the previous questions and answers he will find that there is no contradiction in the answers. Evidently he is under a misapprehension. This particular question was also answered by me, namely, that because of the shortage of steel supplies, etc. and other materials it was not possible to have it opened earlier. This is not the first time that I am answering this question from the same hon. Member. I have several times answered it.

Shri Punnoose: May I know when the line from Kottayam to Quilon will be undertaken and completed?

Shri Alagesan: That will be done somewhere early in 1957, that is the next year.

Shri Velayudhan: It was said that the overall estimate of the cost of this whole line would come to about Rs. 6½ crores. Now about Rs. 2½ crores has been spent and about 33 1/3 per cent of the line will have been constructed. May I know whether the expenses will go beyond the original estimate according to the figure now given by the Minister?

Shri Alagesan: I am unable to say at present, but I do not think that it will go very much beyond the original estimate. There may be a little difference, but it is not likely to go very much beyond the original estimate.

Mr. Speaker: No. 1343, 1344, 1345, 1346, 1347, 1348, 1349. All of them are absent. Why is this Question Hour, then? Hon. Members table questions and do not appear in the House.